

Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
November 15, 2021
6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Quattrone at 6:30 p.m. and he read the Open Public Meetings Act statement which stated, "Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was sent to the *Trenton Times* and the *Windsor-Hights Herald*, and is posted on the Borough website." Do to COVID-19 and self-distancing protocols, this meeting was held remotely through www.zoom.com.

The flag salute followed Roll Call.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Councilmember Susan Bluth</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Joseph Cicalese</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Cristina Fowler</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Joshua Jackson</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Steven Misiura</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Frederick Montferrat</i>	✓	
<i>Mayor Quattrone</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Dimitri Musing, Borough Administrator; George Chin, Construction/Zoning Official and Fred Raffetto, Borough Attorney.

The Flag Salute followed roll call.

Resolution 2021-172 Naming an Acting Deputy Clerk

Moved by Councilmember Fowler; Seconded by Councilmember Bluth

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2021-172

BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

NAMING AN ACTING DEPUTY CLERK

WHEREAS, The Borough Clerk is not available for the November 15, 2021, meeting of the Borough Council; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of Borough Council to deputize Borough Administrator, Dimitri Musing to perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for the public and executive portion of this meeting; and

WHEREAS, Dimitri Musing shall perform all the duties of the Borough Clerk for said meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that Dimitri Musing is hereby named as Acting Deputy Clerk for the meeting of the Borough Council on November 15, 2021, and shall perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for said meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Councilmember Montferrat; Seconded by Councilmember Cicalese

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Central Jersey Transportation Forum – Councilmember Cristina Fowler

Councilmember Fowler stated that the Central Jersey Transportation Forum is seeking a member to represent Hightstown. The group that combines representatives from NJTPA and DVRPC with representatives from Middlesex, Somerset and Mercer Counties. Some guest speakers this year have been NJDOT, NJTPA and NJ Transit presenting information on Safe Routes to Schools, warehouse development and traffic calming ideas. Their membership consists of the Mayor or a Councilmember from the participating counties. Hightstown is the only municipality that is not represented. We are looking for a volunteer to be part of this group. Councilmember Cicalese volunteered to represent Hightstown. Councilmember Fowler will act as an alternate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Quattrone opened the public comment period and the following individuals spoke:

Eugene Sarafin, 628 South Main Street – Congratulations on the continued work that you are doing in town. Would like to see a full water sewer budget so the public can understand it better.

Michelle Epstein 421 South Main Street – thank you Cristina and Joe for taking part in the Central Jersey Transportation Forum. Traffic is a major problem in Hightstown so this is good that we will have representation. Would like to see a weight limit set on all roads in the Borough.

Susan Matson, 25 Dennis Court – She is concerned about the planned project on North Main Street. Cannot find any information on the Hightstown website. What communications have East Windsor and Hightstown regarding the impact on Hightstown?

There being further comments, Mayor Quattrone closed the public comment period.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2021-173 Authorizing Payment of Bills

Moved by Councilmember Bluth; Seconded by Councilmember Jackson

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2021-173

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

WHEREAS, certain bills are due and payable as per itemized claims listed on the following schedules, which are made a part of the minutes of this meeting as a supplemental record;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the bills be paid on audit and approval of the Borough Administrator, the appropriate Department Head and the Treasurer in the amount of \$115,364.69 from the following accounts:

Current		\$32,209.16
W/S Operating		62,313.82
General Capital		604.21
Water/Sewer Capital		0.00
Grant		19,360.00
Trust		0.00
Unemployment Trust		0.00
Animal Control		0.00
Law Enforcement Trust		0.00
Tax Lien Trust		0.00
Public Defender Trust		0.00
Escrow		<u>877.50</u>
Total		<u>\$115,364.69</u>

Resolution 2021-174 Awarding a Contract for Emergency and On-Call Services for Water and Sewer Utilities – Earle Asphalt Company

Moved by Councilmember Montferrat; Seconded by Councilmember Bluth

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2021-174

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**AWARDING A CONTRACT EMERGENCY AND ON-CALL SERVICES FOR
WATER AND SEWER UTILITIES – EARLE ASPHALT COMPANY**

WHEREAS, one (1) bid was received on October 28, 2021, for Emergency and On-Call Services for Water and Sewer Utilities; and

WHEREAS, the bid has been reviewed by the Borough Engineer and it is the Engineer’s recommendation that a contract for the for Emergency and On-Call Services for Water and Sewer Utilities be awarded to the low bidder Earle Asphalt Company of Wall, New Jersey at the price of Bid A - Emergency Services \$30,078.00, Bid B - Critical but non-emergency services \$9,484.00 and Bid C - neither critical nor emergency services \$15,594.00; and

WHEREAS, the execution of this contract is subject to the review and approval of the Borough Attorney to assure that the bid submitted by S. Brothers, Inc. is in order with respect to legal compliance; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the contract for the for Emergency and On-Call Services for Water and Sewer Utilities, be awarded to the low bidder, Earle Asphalt Company of Wall, New Jersey, New Jersey as detailed herein.

Resolution 2021-175 Proclaiming December 6, 2021, as Communities of Light Day

Moved by Councilmember Bluth; Seconded by Councilmember Fowler

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2021-175

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

PROCLAIMING DECEMBER 6, 2021, AS COMMUNITIES OF LIGHT DAY

WHEREAS, it is the policy of Hightstown Borough to recognize organizations that have contributed to the overall benefit of the community; and

WHEREAS, Womanspace, founded in 1977, has demonstrated a unique ability to provide comfort, support services, crisis intervention and safety to women who are victims of sexual assault and domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, Womanspace, in the belief that “peace begins at home”, has asked the Mercer County Community to join them in their struggle against violence toward women by participating in their annual Communities of Light project; and

WHEREAS, Womanspace has provided emergency shelter in secure locations and comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence since 1977 and sexual assault since 2002, for more than 89,777 women, 15,279 children and 6,566 men. Additionally, Womanspace has assisted more than 290,782 hotline callers over the last 44 years; and

WHEREAS, Hightstown Borough commends Womanspace for their efforts to bring an end to the cycle of interpersonal violence imposed on women, children and men; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of Hightstown Borough urges that each and every household demonstrate their support of the concept that “peace begins at home” by placing luminaries along their driveways and sidewalks on Monday, December 7, 2020, as a visible symbol of that support; and

WHEREAS, the proceeds from Communities of Light 2021 will be used to fund vital services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that Monday, December 6, 2021 is Communities of Light Day and hereby commends Womanspace on its many accomplishments and wish them continued success with Communities of Light in the years to come.

NEW BUSINESS

Best Practices

This is required by the State every year. It is signed off on by the CFO, Borough Clerk and Borough Administrator. This just needs to be brought to Council’s attention and let them know that it has been submitted. We have achieved the required score to continue to receive our State funding.

Water Sewer Rate Ordinance

We have been discussing this for quite some time. It is important to raise rates for our water and sewer departments to stay self-liquidating. There has not been a rate increase since 2017. There will be a 5% increase this year and a 1% increase annually starting January 1, 2023 so we make sure our infrastructure is funded properly. Discussion ensued. Council agreed that this increase is needed as is the annual 1% increase starting January 1, 2023.

OLD BUSINESS

First Aid Vehicles

Mayor Quattrone advised Council that both First Aid vehicles are down. Robbinsville is covering the Borough as contracted. First Aid Squad is looking for a new ambulance. He believes that the vehicles can be repaired. The First Aid Squad has an opportunity to borrow a vehicle from another town. Mr. Musing explained that the Squad is looking to borrow through purchasing. Ewing, Pennington Road Squad, is willing to loan us the vehicle. They need to purchase the vehicle to title transfers and once we are through using the ambulance, we would sell the vehicle back. Mr. Musing explained that this would need to be completed by Council by resolution. Discussion ensued. Following discussion, Council advised the squad cannot move forward with anything until we receive a formal letter from the Ewing, Pennington Road Squad.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Construction Department Update

Councilmember Montferrat has been working with the construction office on getting inspections scheduled and completed. George Chin, Construction/Zoning Official stated that there was a home in Enchantment where the water heater flue was not properly connected. Now, the construction office is inspecting all the homes in Enchantment to assure that all homes have the water heater properly connected. Americana diner did work without planning board approval. They are now trying to get on for the December meeting. Mr. Montferrat stated that there are a lot of problems with that parking lot. We need to hold them to Borough Code. The parking lot needs to be corrected and brought up to code since the Borough could be held responsible in a lawsuit. We also need to insure that the diner has the proper insurance amount to cover any issues that may arise. George has sent numerous violations for health and safety issues. Mr. Raffetto has sent a letter that they must complete modifications immediately in relation to the violations sent by Mr. Chin.

Mr. Chin stated that the Construction office has been inspecting Peddie off campus housing. Letters have gone out to Townhouse Gardens and Deerfield Westerlea advising them to register for rental registration.

300th Anniversary Subcommittee

Council President Bluth stated that she met with Mark Fenton and Greg Ciano. They decided that we will combine the anniversary celebration with the Harvest Fair. The Historical Society wants to keep the building open showing movies about our history throughout the day. They would like a street closure from Bank Street to Academy Street. They would also like to erect banners across the road to advertise. The theme would be Hightstown Harvest Fair celebrates 300 + 1. Discussion ensued. Council likes the idea of closing the streets further and hanging banners. Would like to get our Boards and Commissions involved. The proposed date is October 8, 2022.

PRC Group – Rugmill Project

Councilmember Misiura stated that there has not been too much progress. They are still waiting for DEP approvals.

Municipal Facilities

This project was put on hold while we were negotiating with Robbinsville. He and Councilmember and Councilmember Montferrat met with architect. Construction costs have skyrocketed. They spoke about how to move forward and how to cut costs.

MAYOR/COUNCIL/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Councilmember Jackson

HPC meets this week via zoom.

Attended Hightstown Woman's Club presentation of the 300th Anniversary Quilt.

Councilmember Cicalese

Complete Streets and Parks and Rec will meet this week.

Councilmember Montferrat

He will continue working with construction office on open items. Currently he is working with the Police Department on working on GPS for trucks. Trying to keep large trucks out of Hightstown.

Councilmember Fowler

Environmental Commission meeting next week.

Downtown Hightstown - Downtown Businesses has been very busy with the holiday season. Lights and orbs will be put up this Saturday. Holiday window painting contest has begun. Hightstown High School and Peddie students will be painting windows at many of the businesses downtown. Voting will take place November 25 – December 24 voting. Holiday hop and shop will be November 27th, December 4th, 11th and 18th.

Councilmember Misiura

Stated that he is not sure what Ms. Matson was requesting of from Council regarding planned development in East Windsor Township. He suggested that she reach out to the Planning Board secretary if she is looking for additional information.

Council President Bluth

Cultural Arts Commission meeting for this week has been rescheduled for November 30th.

Borough Administrator, Dimitri Musing

Public Works has been picking up leaves and yard debris. George Chin and Dave Bell have sent letters to the business owners on Stockton Street regarding the use of the dumpsters. Owners are not breaking down boxes and leaving garbage outside of the dumpster. We are looking to get this under control by adding another pick up day or an additional dumpster. He will be attending the League of Municipalities this week. Looking forward to networking and getting information that he will be able to share with Council.

Borough Attorney Fred Raffetto

He has been in contact with Lori Lenard from Habitat for Humanity. They have the closing on 232 Academy Street tomorrow. The deed restriction is all in order. They will be having a ceremony tomorrow and is extending an invitation to Mayor and Council. Councilmembers Fowler and Cicalese stated that they will attend the ceremony.

Mayor Quattrone

Attended the quilt presentation this past weekend. The Quilt will be on display at the Hightstown Library until the new Borough Hall is complete. He met with East Windsor last week regarding the Stockton Street sidewalks. We are moving in the right direction with this project. Cultural Arts did a wonderful job with the calendars. He bought on himself. He is curious to see about the First Aid vehicles. Would like to review any work to be done on the vehicles before it is completed.

Councilmember Bluth moved to adjourn; Councilmember Fowler seconded. All ayes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution 2021-176 Authorizing a Meeting that Excludes the Public

Moved by Councilmember Bluth; Seconded by Councilmember Fowler

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Jackson, Misiura and Montferrat voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2021-176

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

AUTHORIZING A MEETING WHICH EXCLUDES THE PUBLIC

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that this body will hold a meeting on November 15, 2021, via www.zoom.com, that will be limited only to consideration of an item or items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to section 7b of the Open Public Meetings Act.

The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed:

Contract Negotiations – Bruckner Southern

Stated as precisely as presently possible the following is the time when and the circumstances under which the discussion conducted at said meeting can be disclosed to the public February 15, 2022, or when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

The public is excluded from said meeting, and further notice is dispensed with, all in accordance with sections 8 and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Bluth moved to adjourn; Councilmember Fowler seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,



Margaret M. Riggio
Borough Clerk

Approved by Hightstown Borough Council: February 22, 2022